

CLAIMS

I Claim:

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1. A method for controlling an aircraft, comprising:
receiving a first trigger;
disabling cockpit control of the aircraft in response to the first trigger; and
enabling a special reversionary mode to control the aircraft in response to the first
5 trigger;
whereby the special reversionary mode comprises entering into a known, safe
flight path.
2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
generating the first trigger, wherein the first trigger is generated outside the
aircraft.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein the first trigger is generated within the
aircraft.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein the first trigger is generated without
human input.
5. The method of claim 3, wherein the first trigger is generated using human
input.

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6. The method of claim 2, wherein the first trigger comprises an encrypted signal.

7. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
sensing a triggering event; and
generating the first trigger in response to the event.

8. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
receiving a second trigger subsequent to receiving the first trigger;
re-enabling cockpit control of the aircraft in response to receiving the second trigger; and
5 disabling the special reversionary mode in response to receiving the second trigger.

9. A method for controlling an aircraft, comprising:
sensing a first triggering event;
generating a first trigger in response to the first triggering event;
receiving the first trigger;
5 disabling cockpit control of the aircraft in response to the first trigger;
enabling a special reversionary mode to control the aircraft in response to the first trigger;
sensing a second triggering event subsequent to entering the special reversionary mode;

10 generating a second trigger in response to the second triggering event;
receiving the second trigger;
re-enabling cockpit control of the aircraft in response to receiving the second
trigger; and
disabling the special reversionary mode in response to receiving the second
15 trigger.

10. Apparatus for controlling an aircraft, comprising:
an activator for generating an activation trigger; and
a switch communicatively coupled to the activator, the switch disabling cockpit
control of the aircraft in response to the activation trigger, the activation trigger further
5 enabling a special reversionary mode.

11. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the special reversionary mode causes
the aircraft to execute a safe, pre-programmed flight path.

12. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the special reversionary mode causes
the aircraft to be controlled from a control point outside the aircraft.

13. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the activator comprises a transceiver
that receives a signal from outside the aircraft and responsively generates the activation
trigger.

14. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the activator comprises a manually activated switch onboard the aircraft.

15. The apparatus of claim 14, wherein the manually activated switch comprises at least one keypad.

16. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the activator comprises a flight path sensor.

17. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the signal is encrypted.

18. The apparatus of claim 10, further comprising:

a deactivator for generating a deactivation trigger;

wherein the switch is communicatively coupled to the deactivator, the switch re-enabling cockpit control of the aircraft in response to receiving the deactivation trigger; and

wherein the deactivation trigger also disables the special reversionary mode.

19. The apparatus of claim 18, wherein the deactivator comprises a manually activated switch onboard the aircraft.

20. The apparatus of claim 19, wherein the manually activated switch comprises at least one keypad.

21. The apparatus of claim 18, wherein the deactivator comprises a sensor that indicates the aircraft has landed.

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